

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUCNDT #0882/01 1171730
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 271730Z APR 06
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8852
INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0817
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0094
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0998
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0843
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0936
RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY 0424
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 0529

UNCLAS USUN NEW YORK 000882

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

VIENNA FOR JEFF HOVENIER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [YI](#) [UNMIK](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR WISNER DISCUSSES KOSOVO STATUS PROCESS
WITH SECRETARY-GENERAL ANNAN

11. (SBU) Summary: In an April 25 meeting in the office of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Secretary's Special

SIPDIS
Representative for the Kosovo Final Status Talks Ambassador Frank Wisner communicated current U.S. thinking on the road ahead for Kosovo in 2006 and solicited the Secretary-General's views. Wisner brought the

SIPDIS
Secretary-General up to date on his recent trip to Europe and

SIPDIS
reviewed current U.S. thinking on a final UNSC resolution. Ambassador Wisner offered the Secretary-General full U.S. support for Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari and his team and argued for the importance of bringing the Kosovar Albanians along on reconciliation and preventing European partners from losing necessary resolve. Secretary-General Annan expressed strong agreement with U.S. thinking and evinced a clear understanding of where the Future Status Process was headed and the obstacles likely to be erected by Belgrade and Moscow. The Secretary-General also agreed that a "no-UN-seat option" for an independent Kosovo would be unworkable and concurred that it would be important to have the support of Kosovo's neighbors in the region. End Summary.

Ambassador Wisner Reviews European Trip: Expect Strong Serb Opposition

12. (SBU) Noting that he had met with Under Secretary Burns the previous day and had just spoken with Martti Ahtisaari, Wisner thanked Secretary-General Annan for the opportunity to meet him again. Providing a brief readout of his recent European trip, Wisner expressed concern that he had begun to see "total Serb opposition to an independence outcome in every way." Prime Minister Kostunica had stated his extreme position twice now and President Tadic was falling into line. If we looked at unreasonable positions Belgrade was staking out, the goal appeared to be functionally carving out part of Kosovo, not focusing sincerely on minority rights. Also worrisome, Belgrade had begun to say it could not reach conclusions on municipal rights until after it knew final status.

Kosovo's New Leadership: Building a Strong Horse

13. (SBU) Ambassador Wisner appealed for a look inside of Kosovo where there was "an extremely talented leadership team." However, President Sejdiu did not have the moral authority of Rugova and Prime Minister Ceku, despite his numerous strengths, lacked a domestic political constituency.

Ambassador Wisner noted there was reason to suspect that former Prime Minister Harradinaj does not want Ceku to "become too comfortable in his chair." He noted that Albanian leaders, including Prime Minister Berisha, talked the most about "possible threats" and wanted to work to strengthen Ceku. Wisner noted that he and Under Secretary Burns had discussed inviting Sejdiu and Ceku to Washington this summer. The Secretary-General asked Ambassador Wisner whether that would not solicit a strong reaction from Belgrade. Ambassador Wisner responded that this was inevitable to some degree, but, it was "important to build a strong horse so it could finish the race."

Timeline For Status Process in 2006 and UN Strategy

14. (SBU) Wisner stressed clearly to Secretary-General Annan that the U.S. believed the status process needed to be completed in 2006 and would "not linger into 2007." Wisner explained that a conceptual timeline for the rest of the status process would leave it concluding on UN turf by the end of the year. Ahtisaari would likely produce a report focusing on decentralization, minority rights and protection of religious sites that the UNSC would approve, making it "a chapeau under which Kosovo could become independent." However, one question to be addressed was precedent for the UN disassembling a legally sovereign nation. It would be necessary to study whether there was anything useful in past cases such as East Timor. The Secretary-General agreed the question was an important one and promised to have his staff research it, but, said his initial thinking was that neither East Timor nor Ethiopia/Eritrea were applicable cases. "East Timor and Ethiopia/Eritrea both involved referenda, whereas Kosovo will essentially involve the international community acting by fiat," explained the Secretary-General.

15. (SBU) Wisner noted that Germany had circulated at a recent Contact Group meeting the idea of accepting independence for Kosovo while denying it a UN seat. Wisner said he had told FM Bakoyannis in Athens that that was an extremely poor idea, saying Under Secretary Burns shared fully his sentiments. Wisner also noted that FM Draskovic had argued the idea as a gambit in Belgrade, but, encountering opposition, dropped it as quickly as he had raised it. "I do not think placating Belgrade on this point will buy us anything," explained Wisner. The Secretary-General agreed fully, saying a sovereign and

SIPDIS

independent Kosovo that lacked a UN seat would be "wholly unworkable."

16. (SBU) Wisner noted Ahtisaari would have the difficult job of taking positions to Belgrade and Pristina to show he has gone the extra mile and bringing them back and would then sit down with the Contact Group probably in June to discuss the ultimate questions. Through the summer and into the fall it would be necessary to make a decision and then to implement it in the final months of the year, explained Wisner. Secretary-General Annan responded that he hoped by then there

SIPDIS

would be significant progress on decentralization, minority rights and protection of religious sites that would put the Kosovar Albanians "in the right light and avoid playing into the hands of Belgrade." Wisner agreed, emphasizing that we had stressed to the Kosovar Albanians that they ought to be highly magnanimous even outside of the constraints of the Future Status Process. He noted that Bishop Theodosia's invitation to President Sejdiu to Easter Mass in Decani had played out very well.

Countries in the Region

¶7. (SBU) Turning to the subject of neighbors in the region, Wisner explained that some were complaining the future status process was moving too fast. The Secretary-General asked whether that meant Russia and Wisner explained that it did, but, messages were also coming from capitals closer in proximity to Kosovo. In Athens, Foreign Minister Bakoyannis had stressed strongly that the status process at the current time was "too fast, too bold and too ambitious." The Secretary-General noted neighboring countries including

SIPDIS

Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania and Greece would surely have concerns. Wisner concurred, adding that Slovakia was conveying concerns as well. The USG had recently demarched European capitals and there had been no voices completely opposing independence, but, a majority had cautioned against moving too quickly and favored finding a fig leaf for Belgrade. The Secretary-General stated that he thought it would be important for the U.S. to support these countries and carry them along. Wisner agreed, noting he had also discussed with Under Secretary Burns the need to make sure that Moscow saw no rift between Washington, London and Paris.

Wisner noted that China seemed convinced that Kosovo was a special case, but, it was not yet clear whether this argument would work with Russia. Wisner explained that he would make ample free time to be part of the discussion on the final UNSC resolution and had also told Ahtisaari that he was prepared to assist him in upcoming shuttle diplomacy.

¶8. (SBU) Secretary-General Annan said he believed "the outcome of the referendum in Montenegro would also have impact." Wisner suggested that in recent conversations in Belgrade President Tadic and young intellectuals had behaved as if Montenegro was already over in their minds and were treating it like it was "a matter of the good kids and bad kids in the same family." To Belgrade's thinking, it might not be so significant, he stated.

UNMIK Should Finish Strongly

¶9. (SBU) As the meeting drew to a close, Wisner raised with the Secretary-General the U.S. belief in the importance of the Kosovo process ending with "a gold star on the UN's blue flag." "It is important that we think about how UNMIK should operate in its final phase and ensure it has energy right until the end and then a smooth hand off," stated Ambassador Wisner. He also asked whether SRSG Jessen-Petersen's

successor would be the first Euro super Ambassador and last SRSG or whether his term would be a short one. The Secretary-General agreed that this was an important question

SIPDIS

to reflect on and offered that he recalled having brought in a double-hatted deputy as the UN mission in Bosnia was winding down, which might serve as a good model for Kosovo. On this point, too, the Secretary-General would task his staff with research.

¶10. (U) This cable was cleared by Ambassador Wisner.

BOLTON